



## [Revelation 6:1-8](#)

(1) And I looked when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures say, like the sound of thunder, "Come and see." (2) And I looked, and behold, *there was* a white horse; and the one who was sitting on it had a bow, and a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer. (3) And when He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come and see." (4) And another horse went out *that was* red; and *power* was given to the one sitting on it to take peace from the earth, and *to cause* them to kill one another; and a great sword was given to him. (5) And when He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see." And I looked, and behold, *there was* a black horse; and the one sitting on it had a balance in his hand. (6) And I heard a voice in *the* midst of the four living creatures say, "A measure of wheat for a silver coin, and three measures of barley for a silver coin: and see *that* you do not damage the oil and the wine." (7) And when He opened the fourth seal, I heard *the* voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come and see." (8) And I looked, and behold, *there was* a pale horse; and the name of the one sitting on it *was* Death, and the grave followed him; and authority was given to them over *one* fourth of the earth, to kill with *the* sword and with famine and with death, and by the beasts of the earth.

*A Faithful Version*

It is clear that the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse—the first four seals—parallel [Jesus'](#) prophecy in [Matthew 24:4-8](#), which ends with the words, "All these are the beginning of sorrows." Our Savior is letting us know that deception, violence, scarcity, and disease are only preludes to the catastrophic events of the last days. We could paraphrase His remark as, "These calamities are par for the course under man's civilization—*fa*worse is yet to come."

The progression of disasters—*of*false ideas leading to war, war to famine, famine to pestilence, pestilence to wild beasts—is *vital* to understanding the spiritual teaching underlying the Four Horsemen. Through a kind of parable, Jesus is instructing us in the

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Revelation 6:1-8 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

principle of cause and effect. If people believe the message of the father of [murder](#) ([John 8:44](#)) rather than the Prince of [Peace](#) ([Isaiah 9:6](#)), they will eventually turn to murder and war to resolve their differences. Like the law of gravity, war causes shortages of food, producing malnutrition and opening the door to disease.

[God](#) is showing us that these sorrows trace their roots back to disobedience and rejection of Him. Mankind has built his civilization on a foundation of sand ([Matthew 7:24-27](#)), and it is no wonder that disasters ensue upon mankind with terrifying regularity. Because God is just, it cannot be otherwise. He has said, "The wages of [sin](#) is death" ([Romans 6:23](#)), and "The soul who sins shall die" ([Ezekiel 18:4](#)). In addition, He has given us two sets of blessings and cursings (Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28) to provide us frightening and vivid depictions of what happens when we disobey Him. The Four Horsemen are similar warnings or reminders that He is still on His throne, judging mankind for his sins.

— Richard T. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**

**[The Four Horsemen \(Part Five\): The Pale Horse](#)**

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